NEWS RELEASE

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INS Sets New Removals Record; Fiscal Year 1999 Removals Reach 176,990

Significant Increase in Institutional Removals Program Leads the Rise

WASHINGTON – The removal of criminal and other illegal aliens by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) reached 176,990 at the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 1999, up 3 percent from FY 1998.

The removals include 62,359 criminal removals and 114,631 non-criminal removals. Criminal alien removals increased 12 percent over FY 1998's total of 55,639. INS is now removing more than 1,199 criminals every week. Drug convictions (47 percent), criminal violations of immigration law (13 percent), convictions for assault (6 percent), and burglary (5 percent) accounted for most of the criminal alien removals.

The expedited removal process—which was established by Congress to remove aliens who arrive at ports of entry with fraudulent, improper or no entry documents—removed 89,035 illegal aliens for the fiscal year, an increase of approximately 16 percent over 1998 levels.

The largest increase in criminal removals occurred in the Institutional Removal Program (IRP—formerly the Institutional Hearing Program), a national effort to identify, charge and conduct removal proceedings for convicted criminal aliens while they are still serving their prison sentence so that they can be immediately removed from the United States upon completion of their sentences. The IRP is a cooperative effort of INS, the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) and participating federal and state correctional agencies.

A total of 19,592 criminal aliens was removed through the IRP program in FY 1999, a nearly 45 percent increase over FY 1998, when the INS removed 13,545 aliens through the IRP.

"Improvements we have made over the past year have allowed us to achieve excellent results from the IRP program in Fiscal 1999," said Doris M. Meissner, INS Commissioner. "We are very pleased that the exceptional efforts of INS field personnel, combined with excellent cooperation from our federal partners as well as

state and local officials, have allowed us to remove criminal aliens who have completed their sentences with greater efficiency and effectiveness."

The IRP continues to be a key element in the Administration's strategy for improving immigration enforcement. INS targeted resources to seven states—Arizona, California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York and Texas—which account for 75 to 80 percent of all foreign-born state inmates nationwide. Currently, the IRP operates at 11 sites in the federal Bureau of Prisons and in 40 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

INS purchased video teleconferencing equipment for 20 IRP-related sites in FY 1999 to permit interviews and hearings at remote locations. Use of this technology has decreased travel time and expenses and improves security and public safety by reducing the need for transporting criminal aliens, while also reducing travel requirements for judges, interpreters, attorneys and other court staff.

Included in the overall removal numbers for the year are 9,283 administrative removals—the deportation of convicted aggravated felons who are not legal permanent residents, are not eligible for relief from deportation, and are ordered removed by INS officers. The number of administrative removals nearly doubled in the past year, up from 5,833 in FY 1998.

The removal figures include only those removed based on a final order of removal issued by an immigration judge or immigration officer. The figures do not include an additional 72,000 aliens in INS custody who were allowed to voluntarily depart the United States after being charged with a violation of immigration law. The removal figures also do not include approximately 1.5 million apprehensions and voluntary returns at U.S. borders during FY 1999.

FINAL ORDER REMOVALS: Top Nationalities in FY 1999 (Oct. - Sept.)

			Total	%	Criminal	Non-Criminal
Country De	eportable	s Inadmissibles	Removals	Of Total	Removals	Removals
Mexico	33,037	114,299	147,336	83	48,047	99,289
El Salvador	1,851	1,966	3,817	2	1,930	1,887
Guatemala	1,101	2,112	3,213	2	981	2,232
Honduras	1,042	2,099	3,141	2	1,085	2,056
Dominican Republi	c 1,999	1,116	3,115	2	2,283	832
Colombia	1,130	873	2,003	1	1,469	534
Jamaica	1,200	784	1,984	1	1,342	642
Canada	315	655	970	1	514	456
Ecuador	197	555	752	0	161	591
Peru	233	467	700	0	192	508
Brazil	59	552	611	0	49	562
Philippines	360	160	520	0	286	234
Nigeria	249	202	451	0	274	177
Haiti	217	214	431	0	293	138
China, People's Rep	o. 102	300	402	0	103	299
Nicaragua	206	173	379	0	247	132
Pakistan	96	276	372	0	55	317
United Kingdom	291	68	359	0	211	148
India	121	198	319	0	71	248
Trinidad & Tobago	210	94	304	0	210	94
Other Countries	3,030	2,781	5,811	3	2,556	3,255
TOTAL	47,046	129,944	176,990	100	62,359	114,631

Source: Office of Policy and Planning, U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service

Notes: 1. Total Removals = Criminal + Non-Criminal removals OR Deportables + Inadmissibles.

Removals by INS District in Major Metropolitan Areas (Oct. - September)

Location	FY 1998	FY 1999	% Change
Atlanta, GA	1,977	2,358	+19
Baltimore, MD	609	543	-11
Boston, MA	906	976	+8
Chicago, IL	1,839	1,874	+2
Dallas, TX	6,836	4,511	-34
El Paso, TX	17,773	16,769	-6
Houston, TX	5,280	6,792	+29
Los Angeles, CA	8,935	9,243	+3
Miami, FL	4,188	3,334	-20
New York, NY	3,582	4,005	+12

^{2.} Figures include verified removals through September 30, 1999.

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Newark, NJ	1,281	1,287	_
Philadelphia, PA	2,037	1,558	-24
Phoenix, AZ	17,661	19,808	+12
San Diego, CA	58,876	65,540	+11
San Francisco,	3,408	4,204	+23
CA			